

July 15, 2019

Re: Agenda item IE6.8 Vision Zero 2.0 - Road Safety Plan Update

Friends and Families for Safe Streets (FFSS) and Walk Toronto submit the following letter to City Council for consideration for item IE6.8 Vision Zero 2.0 - Road Safety Plan Update:

To save lives, we need a 40 km/hr speed limit on arterial roads

FFSS and Walk Toronto are calling on the City of Toronto to commit fully to implementing Vision Zero in a way that achieves its core mission: that *no* loss of life or health is ever acceptable. We urge the City to implement policies that will effectively realize the intent of Vision Zero, specifically:

Lower the speed limit on arterial roads to 40 km/h by default instead of the proposed 50 km/h.

We are happy to see some international best practices have made it into Vision Zero 2.0, particularly road redesign, which can significantly affect how fast someone chooses to drive their car.¹ Last municipal election, many successful Councillors endorsed [#BuildTheVisionTO](#) recommendations for improved road design and lowering speed limits city-wide to 40 km/hr on arterial roads and 30 km/hr on residential streets. Vision Zero cannot succeed unless Toronto City Council commits to redesigning streets for the safest possible motor vehicle speeds.

Nearly all serious injuries and deaths (83%) happen on arterial roads. We know that when a driver hits a pedestrian at 50 km/h, there is an 85% likelihood that the impact will kill the pedestrian. The fatality rate falls to 30% at speeds of 40 km/h. Not only does lowering the speed limit to 40 km/h drastically improve someone's chances of surviving a collision, but driving at a lower speed can help avoid collisions entirely. Even if someone makes a mistake on the road, the increased reaction time can be the difference between a close call and a life-altering injury or death.

We should be building a city that truly supports the concept of Vision Zero: that no number of road deaths are acceptable. We will not prioritize high speeds over our loved ones. With a sufficient reduction in speed, we can make collisions less fatal and work toward *truly* realizing the goal of zero traffic-related deaths.

¹ Road redesign can include: narrowing lane widths, adding roadside landscaping with trees and plants, and curb extensions to slow turning cars, which induce the acceptable speed and reinforce posted speed limits.



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About

Friends and Families for Safe Streets is working to end traffic violence in Toronto by changing laws, enforcement, street design, public attitudes, and traffic culture to make our vibrant streets safer and more equitable for all road users, while supporting those who are survivors.

For more information on FFSS, please visit ffsafestreets.ca or email us at advocacy@ffsafestreets.ca.

Walk Toronto is a grassroots pedestrian advocacy group that works with various levels of government, community groups and citizens to improve walking conditions and safety in Toronto.

For more information on Walk Toronto, please visit walktoronto.ca.